

*Songwriter created “Go Cubs Go,” “City of New Orleans,” devoted life to Chicago, music*

WASHINGTON – Following a victorious Cubs’ home opener, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) announced today that his bill to name a Chicago post office for the late songwriter Steve Goodman also earned a win, passing unanimously out of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The bill now moves to the full House for a vote.

Quigley’s effort to memorialize and celebrate Goodman’s life at the Lakeview Post Office, located at 1343 W. Irving Park Road, has the full support of the Illinois Congressional delegation, the Old Town School of Folk Music, and a growing list of local and nationally known recording artists.

**“While most Chicagoans know him for the song we sing after every Cubs’ win, Steve Goodman’s contributions reach far beyond the ivy-covered walls of Wrigley,” said Quigley. “Goodman was one of the most prolific American songwriters and performers of our time whose songs have been played by Willie Nelson, Jimmy Buffett, and John Denver and whose short but tremendous life reminds us how one person can impact so many others.”**

Steve Goodman was among the group of talented Chicago songwriters who emerged from the 1960s folk scene that began at Old Town School and emigrated to the Earl of Old Town, the Fifth Peg, and ultimately the whole country. Along with John Prine, Bonnie Koloc, Bob Gibson, and a host of others, Steve Goodman made Chicago one of the focal points of the American folk music scene. Steve's monumental "City of New Orleans," made famous by Arlo Guthrie and Willie Nelson, was a celebration of railroading and the American Midwest. The song earned him one of his two posthumous Grammy Awards.

Most remarkable, however, is that Goodman crafted such an illustrious music career while battling leukemia for 15 years until his death at age 36 in 1984. On the day he was scheduled to sing the "Star Spangled Banner," Jimmy Buffett filled in and dedicated the national anthem to his friend at Wrigley Field, where Goodman's ashes were later scattered and his song is still sung after every Cubs' win. In 2007, then-Lt. Governor Pat Quinn declared October 5<sup>th</sup> to be "Steve Goodman Day" in the State of Illinois. (A full biography is available below.)

**"It is entirely fitting for Steve Goodman to be recognized through the naming of a post office – a public building used indiscriminately by everybody, from all walks of life, in the course of pursuing the business of everyday life, which provided the inspiration for so much of his life's work," said James Bau Graves, Executive Director of the Old Town School of Folk Music. "On behalf of the Old Town community, I enthusiastically lend our voices in support of this effort."**

Along with Graves, musicians John Prine, Bonnie Koloc, and Corky Siegel have submitted a letter in support of Quigley's initiative. More artists are expected to join in the coming weeks.

Post offices have been renamed by Congressional law since 1971. Steve Goodman becomes the second honoree in the 5<sup>th</sup> District joining Roger McAuliffe, a member of the Chicago Police Department and Illinois House of Representatives, who was recognized at the 6441 W. Irving Park USPS location in 1996. Except in special cases for high-ranking officials such as the President of the United States, post offices may only be named in honor of the deceased.

Quigley's resolution was passed unanimously by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, on which Quigley sits. It now moves to the full House for consideration. Once the measure is approved, Quigley is planning a "musical" unveiling event at the post office for the community. More details will be made available as the legislation and plans progress.

## **Steve Goodman Biography**

Steve Goodman is perhaps best known by Chicagoans and Cubs fans as the writer and performer of "Go Cubs Go", the song that plays at Wrigley Field following Cubs' wins. But while this song may bring him notoriety, Steve Goodman's life was an inspiration for many other reasons. Be it the courage and perseverance that characterized his 15-year battle with leukemia, his celebrated contributions to American folk music, or the general enthusiasm and good humor with which he approached life, Steve Goodman was a great Chicagoan by all accounts.

Goodman's career in folk music featured both exemplary writing and performance. Besides his Cubs-related music, Goodman released 10 albums of folk music and five albums of his work have been released posthumously. He received two Grammy Awards, both posthumously, for his writing of the hit "City of New Orleans" and his album *Unfinished Business*. In fact, "City of New Orleans" was a top-20 hit for Arlo Guthrie in 1972, and a number one country music hit for Willie Nelson in 1985, the year that Goodman won his first Grammy.

Goodman's singing career was centered largely around the folk music clubs of Chicago, and Goodman wrote and performed many classic songs about the city, including two well known songs about the Chicago Cubs – "The Dying Cub Fan's Last Request" and "Go, Cubs, Go." Other great Chicago-related songs of Goodman's include "The Lincoln Park Pirates," about the notorious Lincoln Towing Company, and "Daley's Gone," eulogizing the late Mayor Richard J. Daley.

The Old Town School of Folk Music played a major role in Goodman's music career. He studied at the School in the 1960s with folk music luminaries such as Roger McGuinn of the Byrds, Bob Gibson, Bonnie Koloc, and his good friend John Prine. Along with these artists, Goodman helped build the School's reputation as home to many of folk music's greatest writers and performers.

Most remarkable, however, is that Goodman crafted such an illustrious music career while battling leukemia for 15 years until his death at age 36. He endured his fight with courage and

good humor – it's said that he nicknamed himself "Cool Hand Leuk" – and tragically died in 1984 just eleven days before his beloved Cubs played their first playoff game at Wrigley Field since 1945. Goodman had been asked to sing the "Star Spangled Banner" before that game, but Jimmy Buffett filled in and dedicated it to his friend. Goodman's ashes were later spread at Wrigley Field, and his memory lives on every time the Cubs win a home game and thousands happily sing along to "Go Cubs Go."